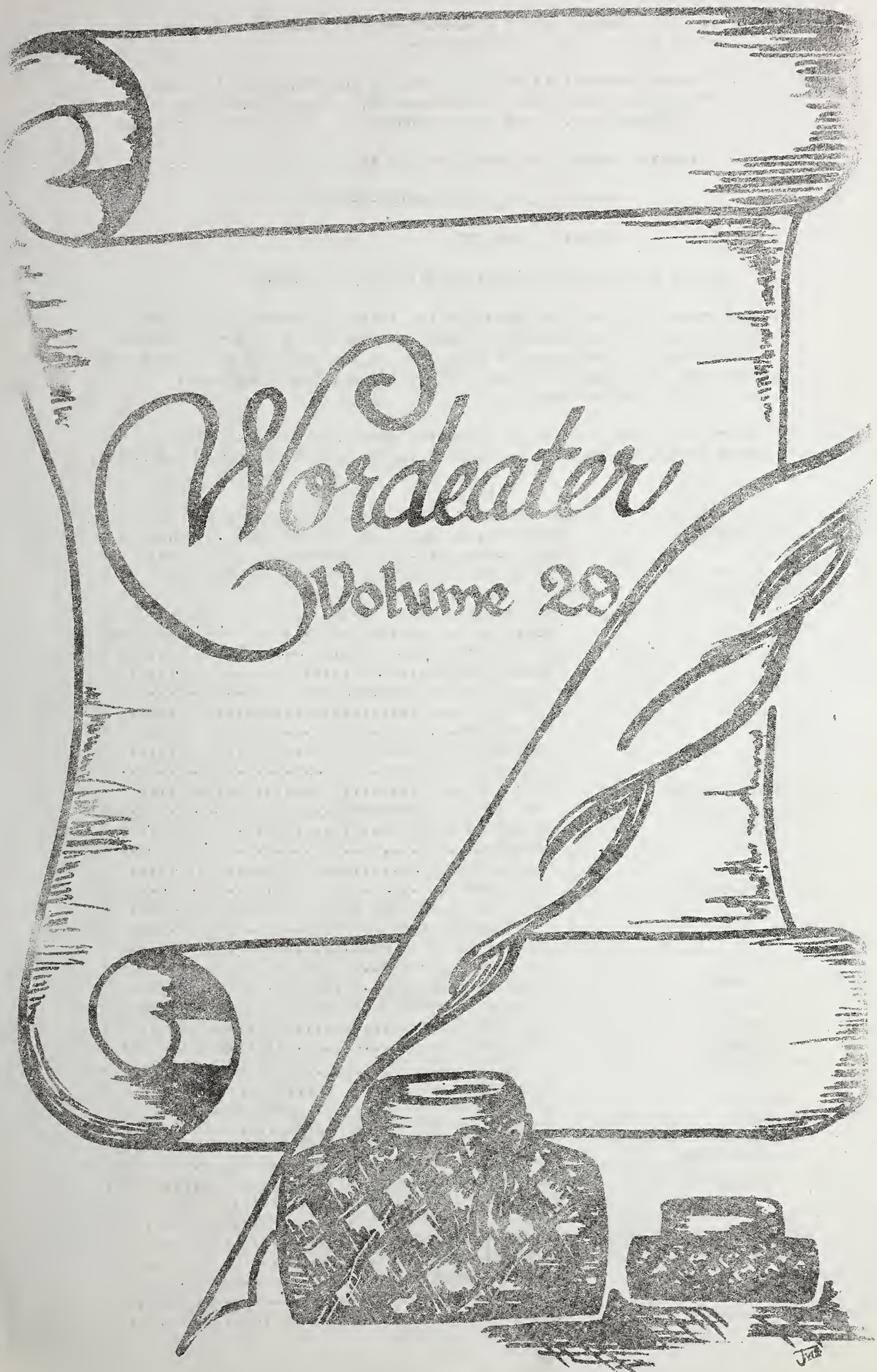
Wordeater
Volume 29

WORDEATER XXVIIII

WORDEATER XXVIIII STAFF

Nancy Lockhart	Mary Martin	Janice LeFevers
Pat Mulder	Judy Belfield	John Stobart

For this issue, to get a submission accepted, four of the above had to vote for acceptance.

Present manuscripts or cover designs for Number 30 to John Stobart in room C1069 by December 13, 1979. Manuscripts will not be returned. They may be anonymous. They should be typed.

Wordeater awards for this issue go to:

Poetry: MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

Prose: MYRT FINN

Cover designs were submitted by: JUDY BELFIELD

John Stobart alone is responsible for these judgments. Loudmouth McKracken, however, thought it wise to note that past award winners do start with a handicap and that many of the poets in this issue are deserving of special mention: Judy Belfield, Nancy Lockhart, Pat Mulder, Adriane Saylor.

Poetry and Prose winners will receive awards of : $25.00 each. Cover design awards will be awarded in the amount of $10.00 per cover.

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JEFF E. DAVIS

THE DRIVE-IN BLUES

I went to see the girl who works at the drive-in restaurant
thinking I had nothing to lose
I sat all night and watched this curb girl
instead of going on an endless cruise

I asked her when she got off work, and she said
"Not too late,
I'd love to go, it sounds far-out,
But I've already got a date..."

I've played that game so many times, it's always hard to lose
All that's left to do is sit around all night
When you're dealing with the drive-in blues

I've got the drive-in blues, can't get out of these shoes
Nowhere to go, don't know anything new
I think about my friends, about "way back when'
It seemed we knew no fear when we were younger...

The cars go around, then they circle the town
And they wind up back where they started from
It's always been that way, there's never much to say
When we're thinking about what we can become

We sit at the drive-in, or we just keep on drivin' around
You know these drive-in blues are really hard to lose
Sometimes they really drag you down

I've got the drive-in blues, can't get out of these shoes
Only so far to go, only so much to do.
I've got to be drivin', but I'll be back to the drive-in
Where I'm sure I'll find some people drivin' round
and munchin' down

And we'll all go drivin' along those country roads,
Music playin', forgettin' about those drive-in blues
The night air cure's the only way to shake those blues

Mm mmm mmm mm mmm
La da da da da dum da dum dum dum,
Mmm.

NANCY LOCKHART

LOCKHART

My brain will give
You anything it has
And never ask for a receipt-
But my tight-fisted heart
Is a miser
Who dwells in a bolted cave,
And never even gave
At the office.

ASKIA
(Ronald Dale Evans)

DA CALL

I called this morning and you
wasn't there, i won't call no
mo

I called again this afternoon
and you wasn't there, I won't call
no mo

i'm calling late at nite and you ain't
there, i ain't gon call no mo,
I'll write.

JUDY BELFIELD

SPRINGTIME
(for Pat)

One of those barefoot days --
you know --
roll up your jeans,
tie up your hair,
and lie down in the grass
to watch the clouds --
wishing you were as cool
as the blue of the sky --
and not wanting to move.
A julep-day, I guess --
one you might imagine
with a large, white-pillared veranda,
lilac bushes adding aroma,
and a porch swing that squeals.
Not too hot a day --
just somewhere short of eighty-five
and lazy --
nobody around to talk to
except the birds --
and they don't really listen.
Found a worm
crawling on the sidewalk --
a renegade from the garden --
plodding his way who knows where.
Why are ants so busy?
always in a hurry?
Lemon-vapor fills one's mind --
frosty in a dripping glass
that turns warm too soon.
Catalpa flowers opening up --
each painted individually
and identically
by an invisible artist
who hops from branch to branch
when no one's looking --
while magnolia petals
fall,
one by one,
to the ground,
making pink piles of lace
on the green carpet.
Suspended in springtime
at three in the afternoon,
there is no time --
or reason.

NANCY LOCKHART

POETRY SEEDS

Directions for growing a poet tree:

Plant contents in fertile grey matter. Germination time - questionable. Keep in open area with plenty of light and some shading. Give food for thought on occasion; beware of something fishy. There will be much to weed out unless planted in a crock. Water with sweat from the brow and lots of imagination. Pray alot. Fertility dances couldn't hurt.

SOL ILOQUY

I swing on the slippery string
Of the sun:
Come out, come out
Where ever you are!
I can't read Gepetto
When you're out in the meadow.
I can't even find my shoes
To run about catching stars
In this empty apron (my solar-
plexis shield).
Won't you yield, ultra-violet
And smile at me
One of these days, before
Extreme Unction's been prayed,
And my function's been layed
To rest in some midnight
Solarium?

A POET-TREE

You've gone and planted a
Poet-tree in the backyard of Ballyhoo,
And the damn thing's taken root.
'Tis not far from groan,
With leaflets (jaded) green.
Just look at that poet-tree
Squatting there, where
Vacancy once scratched its head.
No Whitman's sampler.
No sign of Frost;
Goings on but no Cummings.
If nothing else, this poet-tree
Is realestate
For the birds

SECOND SCRUB
(Accolades in John-rah Genre)

"I've come for my bath," I announced to the summer room, but the groom would not draw my tub.

"Do it yourself. For some like it hot, while others advocate cool," he spoke through his Turkish taffey.

"I've made my own soap from lye; why do you burst the bubbles?" I asked the man in the sink.

He answered, "What do <u>you</u> think?"
I could only guess as I slipped on his ring in the tub.

"There, I'm clean and dry, now." He saw the fallacy dripping from behind my ears, and smiled while crooking his finger.
I lingered after the Fall with guarded toe.
I had to know the degree of my second scrub. But the thermometer dropped
Letting Mercury fly
On TWA (two winged ankles) leaving
Behind a can
Of elbow grease and a box of
Ivory Snow.

A WOOD TO THE WORDCHOPPER

Is this oak "A"?
That is what I pine for.
If this was redwood it
Spruce up my grade,
Or go against the grain
Of an old crab?
Am I barking up the wrong tree?
Am I chestnut good enough?
I've tried to apple-eye myself;
To branch out; to go out on
A limb.
I wanted to go to the forest,
Though I was petrified
Of being a sap.
Won't you have pithy
On me?
A dogwood.

NANCY LOCKHART, POETRY SEEDS, con't.

APATHY

Though the catalyst is present,
The chemicals are inert.
No bubbles.
No smoke.
Only passivity to choke on.
Test tube babies grow,
But facsimiles are manequins:
Baroque jokes, which don't
Make even mad scientists
Laugh.

POSTERIORI

Can you forgive this
Monkeying around?
Oh, that I had
A prehensiled mind
Instead of just a pain-
Behind.

120 ENGLISH DRIVE

A grape-stomping woman
With purple toes sits before
A gentleman she hardly knows
And sips a martini
Made with a polmolive olive
And yellow vermouth.
She's paid her rent on
His booth where she receives
Dreaming lessons
Three times a week.

SUGGESTION BOX MATERIAL

Give a leper Clearsil.
Give a worm a spinal.
Give a bird a pussy cat.
But don't give me a FINAL

******

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

RAIN POEM

and the rain is an afternoon psalm
breaking into wildchorus over chicago
rooftops, tucking summer leaves back
into freshwater graves
bowing. the one lazy moment of day.
toppling the sky, gently.
there it is, again,
the raining of gentle ladies
there it is, again and again
so many quiet falling hearts of
august.

JUDY BELFIELD

GIVE ME YOUR RAINDROPS

Give me your raindrops
and I will make of them
flowers --
showers of showy posies
just for you.
Give me your thought-buds
and I will make a bouquet
that will fill galaxies with fragrance
and glorious, splashy color.
Why do you hold yourself from me?
All I want to do
is know you --
carry that knowledge of you
into the cosmos
and bring it back
wrapped in sunpaper
tied with moonribbons
and sprinkled with starflecks.

PAT MULDER

MY SUN IS COVERED

My sun is covered
with heavy grey clouds
and ominous dark bands
of Prussian blue violence,
tightening around my head
until my barometer
falls to a level
so low as to be comparable
to the sound of death.
The absence of assimilation
and rational thought
indicate a sombre steady-state
of non-being,
or - perhaps a system
of lurking low pressure
like the silver eye
of a hurricane
that will burst forth
into exhilarating exuberance
from another direction,
cleansing my mind,
opening new air-roads
of perception
that could not exist
under the high pressure
of a never-ending
buttercup sky.

MYRT FINN

RENDEZVOUS

He whispered in my hair
Tracing my face with tender touch.
So smooth. To soothe.
So cool.

He embraced my body.
Surrender came with sensual strokes of soft.
So smooth. To soothe.
So cool.

My open window beckoned him in.
My lover....gentle wind.

THE ELUDING

I flee my prison of day
To wander aimlessly.
Along the avenue of memory.
Seeking little nooks nestled carefully
In mind's crevices.
I tease yesterdays into focus
With heartstrings.
Drinking from pools of recall,
Delicious with the magic spice
Of a word...a touch...a moment.
I'm invigorated with freedom!
Path's bend reveals my jailer, Day!
Captured, I must return to my cell of reality.
I shall escape again.

JUDY BELFIELD

THIS LOVE

This love, like auburn autumn's shed its green,
Laments the loss of spring's viridity,
Of fledgling leaves burst forth where buds had been
To flutter soft in jade frivolity.
With gold and crimson masks of sparkling flash
The love-leaves' colors cool upon the tree.
A calumny, the incandescent splash:
The pyrophorous hues are sizzle-free.

Damned Winterchill lurks somewhere in the air.
Unseen, unheard, the icy, furtive fiend
Begins to hone the blade of freezing stare --
Dislodging gale of cold, chaotic wind.
Poor leaves know not the cutthroat's frosty breath;
They dance a blind and mindless waltz of death.

****

JUDY BELFIELD

WHAT WILL I DO WHEN SUMMER COMES?

What will I do when summer comes?
and the empty heat dries up my ink?
and words escape the fingers
like cicadas in the dark?

I think now of a summer gone by --
When a thirteen-year-old girl
watching the Late Show
fell in love with Errol Flynn
while her mother canned tomatoes
on a stifling August night --
and the warmth,
like thick perfume,
gave the air a muggy, impenetrable scent.
When the white sheets on the bed
were sticky with perspiration
and the girl yearned for a breeze
and a kiss
that would take her away.

I never liked summer --
with its red-skinned days
and squishy-tar streets
and afternoon hosings-down to keep cool
while you waited
for the ice-cream man's bell
and dirt settled in rings on your neck
and between your toes --
and chlorine pools looked so fresh
and smelled so irresistable --
and you prayed you'd get to go for a ride in the car
so the air that stood still
would blow hot in your face,
and somehow --
that was heaven.

And now,
those summer days are grinning in the doorway
and they'll barge in uninvited
when they feel the time is right --
and they'll hang around,
moping in their hazy hangovers
until they're ready to leave --
And their big, dusty feet
will trample on my words --
withering their succulence,
drying up the nectar,
and squashing out the life.

SOME MOMENTS ARE SO GREY

Some moments are so gray --
not gray like steel
or dappled horses,
or even like the color of stormy skies --
but some moments
are gray
like cowards --
afraid to be black
or white,
or like neuters --
nothings.
And when these times descend,
it's nice
to have someone
on whom to pour the gray,
while some other tint
is added slowly
to the moment.

JUDY BELFIELD

TURMOIL WEARS A SHELL

I was layin' on the beach, jus' layin' there in the hot sun. An' the sand was all aroun' me, wet 'H cool. An' the waves kep' washin' up over my legs, an' then sneakin' back out ta sea. An' that's how it was, ya know, lazy an' nice an' sometimes salty smellin' -- jus' layin' there.

An' then, 'long comes this lil ole crab, kinda saunterin' sidewise, an' watchin' me with them stickin'-up eyes. An' he stops about four foot away from my leg an' he jus' sets there not movin'. Well, he's starin' at me an' I'm astarin' right back an' I think he gets the same message I'm gettin': We're jus' both a part a this whole bledsed-peaceful day, an' was'n it nice ta jus' set there in that cool, wet sand, with the waves washin' in an' out. Yep, that's what we did, jus' laid there, passin' the time.

Now then, this crab, he pulls in them stickin'-out eyes after awhile, like he's gonna take a nap. An',well, I was tired too, an' my eyelids were ahangin' kinda heavy, an' they jus' sorta slammed shut. An' that lil ole crab musta been watchin' perty close. 'Cause justiz I'm driftin' off inta dreamland, I feel this tur'ble clampin' pinch on the big toe a my right foot.

Well, now, sure's hell, I'm wide awake! An' I'm yellin' at this crab who's got a damn pow'rful holda my toe. An' I start shakin' my leg an' howlin' an' wrigglin' there in the sand, but that little dickens, he won't let go. An' at one point, I figgered maybe I'll jus' stand up an' stamp on the critter with my free foot. But I didn't -- don't know why.

Now, justa bout when I'm sure the damned lil devil is gonna make 'imself a perm'nent fixture on my foot, up sweeps one helluva wave. An' his head an' my toe is both under water. An' he lets loose all'va sudden, an' my toe feels like a hot basketball ready ta bust.

I seen 'im floatin' out with the water, an' I yells after 'im, "An' stay there, ya little son-ova-bitch!"

An' I picked up some a the sand an' threw it in his direction, an' hobbled up offa that beach. An' I ain't <u>never</u> been back.

PAT MULDER

WHO IS THE INVADER?

My attic has been invaded
by frantic fears
and angry cries
that race thru aisles
of fierce order,
jumping over brown clay memories,
reaching sky-blue,
tumbling into green jars of eternity
that have no lids,
breaking the edges
of my porcelain sanities,
dueling with thoughts
that were not ordered,
packaged, stored,
or invited,
thoughts that invade
and shatter the serenity
of a carefully conveived attic
where I had hoped to hide
from myself.

***

NANCY LOCKHART

LUNAR ECLIPSE

The moon died this morning.
I watched it ebb into a coma;
I attended its wake.

The moon turned into a cinnamon sky-cookie;
A balloon with a broken string
Going brown with pollution.

Today the moon yawned
Itself inside out.

A cosmonaut tossed an astronaut
A frisbie across the face of the moon.

I saw the moon roll back
Into its mother's womb,
And I noticed a jumping cow's utter frustrations.

I witnessed a unilateral castration
Of the man in the moon.

I spied a mouse slicing the moon
To make a green cheese
And jelly sandwich.

The moon was a silver dollar today
Which God slipped into His pocket.

PAT MULDER

PERHAPS TOMORROW

I am withdrawing,
slowly curling into myself
like a turtle,
hiding my raw edges.
My vulnerable self
is returning to a place
where it will be secure
from a world
I feel my mind rejecting,
a world my soul
must hide from
if I am to maintain
my tenuous stability.
I am withdrawing,
curling up like a snail.
Don't see me.
I'm not at home.
Go Away!

***

JUDY BELFIELD

HOW YOU SPARKLE

How you sparkle
in my night --
flickering in the darkness
of my moon-forsaken sky --
dancing with carbonated feet
that glimmer and pop
like neon bubbles.
Flash your smile again:
It shows the secret you
in eyes
that cannot hide
your mystery
or
your
self.

I AM

I am,
as is everyone,
unlike any other person on earth --
and it's great that we're all one-of-a-kind-
but
I feel like
a green swan.

NANCY LOCKHART

CLIMB MAX

We are mountaineers my dear,
So let us climb together,
One at a time -
Giddy
Above the sea
Level with me.
Care
To change your altitude?
Ain't ya in the mood
For a raise?
You first -
I'll gaze (peek so to speak)
As you peak.
What's that squeek,
The springs?
The autumns?
Not to worry -
I'll say I caught him
Stealing the cherry
Off the top.
Stop!
Save some for me.

JUDY BELFIELD

BLACK SKY

Black sky
dripping its ink
over the earth --
Punctuated by a lemon-lollipop moon
that lights up
a glistening pin-point
in the middle of a tear --
Soft, muted air
racing to an unknown destination,
stopping on its way
to giggle
in the veridian lace of treetops.

Cool May night,
I spend you weeping --
hoping for daylight
to take it all away.

PAT MULDER

INDIANA

Sitting on the balcony
quietly
thinking about fall
and acorn pipes
carefully carved
while anxious squirrels
scampered through dry leaves
watching.
Remembering the buzz
of locusts,
like lazy static
filling the warm air
on a gentle day.
Standing, once again,
on the hanging bridge,
watching
the silent fish
floating
on the bottom
of a sleepy noon river,
and the giant sycamore leaves
riding the soft current
like pixie ships.
I will be there soon.

S. STEINKE

AFTERMATH OF FUN

The party's finally over,
Its the dawning of dawn,
A trace of sun for you and I
exchanging empty glances,
recovering cigarette butts
from our well manicured lawn.

We've performed so very sweetly
for the proper crowd
But those happy scripts lose their value
when our own indifference speaks
just as loud.

Impossible to communicate without the
furtive glint which confirms mistrust
Difficult to touch without flinching away
with disdain and disgust.

Tomorrow - perhaps we can set things right.
That is - when everything we have to do is done.
But for now it's only
you and I
All alone
in the aftermath of fun.

MARIANNE CARTIER BROWN

BACK IN THE GREAT GRAND
COMMON OF INDIANA

back in the great grand common of indiana
i sat under my bed groping for my poeticlit
and sweating with a novella
eating sugar by the spoonful, licking
my tongue over the cool grainy sweet of words.
each night my mother called to me as though i were
committing mortal sin.
"marianne" she would say "what are you doing"
mother, i would, (and still silently say),
can't you see i am swimming,
laughing at the duck boats as they spring from the ropes of
reason? can't you see i am
a mermaid, washing the brine of the red snapperfish
onto my scales?
can you see i am a lover, in the bed of the stars,
giggling in the face of the sun, gulping the
maze of the nebula, dancing with no real feet
in the pants of the drunken universe?
in the dark of the bed, the books spring open, mother
they are the first real meats of the meal.
the arabian nights and abdullah ben curah,
the girl in the kitchen, the boxcar children,
the rikkitikki poetry of the mongoose bite,
the love deaths, the southern belle, the hell
of the south, the crimson of the covers,
all of these are also me, the spoon in my mouth,
the sugar of the days on my tongue,
where were my 18 years, mama, the years of the leggy idiot
who refused to eat death
who refused to be the brains behind the homemade bread
the macaroni salad? who sat in a closed door room
and wrapped herself up good in the fire of an author's thought?
the sin the sin of words,
the beat of the junkie poet, the l s d slobs
who fancy to be free.
the mexican winos who wrote on the backs of the
bottles, the kerouac and rimbaud who cursed in the guts of
death? the midwives of art and believers in life.
this is the black of the night in the common ground of indiana.
i see now that i carry freedom on my back like a sparrow.
books covered with the smell of dust and sex
and i am alive with them
in them i find my guts, mother, but
first you must stop your voice,
the voice of the mother, father,
parents of the ghouls. there is
only the thought god, no other.
in the dark of the bed, the pajama sanctuary, where the day
became sweet night and i no longer
bled.

NELSON F. RODRIGUEZ

SHE'S A VAMPIRE/ERIPMAV A S'EHS

Fingernail color flashes. Splashes of deep perfume. Fake eyelashes. Bat The wings of doom.

Fiery hair color matches, lips red with fire. Slinky nyloned leg catches, thoughts filled with desire.

Dressed in sparkled eloquency. Body luring to hold. Spurting estatic immensity. Teeth bite into my soul. oooh don't let go

Fake eyelashes. Splashes of deep perfume. Fingernail color flashes, as lightning strikes the room.

Stories unable to tell. Deep, dark, within her smiles the mistress of hell.

Nibbling the minds on which she is fed. Dreams whereon she makes her bed. Child of evil - Mist of night - Crusher of souls - By moonlit rite.

Dressed in sparkled eloquency. Body luring to hold. Spurting estatic immensity. Teeth bite into my soul.

Fingernail color flashes. Splashes of deep perfume. Fake eyelashes. Bat the wings of doom

******

ADRIANE SAYLOR

LUNATIC.....

Went to sleep in the moonlight
hadn't heard the stories
did not know the myths
just wanted to dream
of killers
in black limousines
now I am the crazie
can't tell anyone
that I've got one screw missing
I am an eater
I consume the garbage of the
world
relish the poison that drips
from smiles and nods
no one seems to understand me
no one even hears or sees me
I want to slice up my body
give it away at an auction for
heartmongers
here it is take it
it's cheap
I live in the ashes of the dawn
sleep in the arms of the moon.

*****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

LOVE IN THE RAW

Today we were a fantasy
no pretending
no prelude
just the juxtaposed silence
of desire blending with
the salty flavor of lust
I hug you to my bones
open my arms like a Venus Flytrap
into my parlor darling
you stick to me
I stick to you
and somehow sounds become colors
red through the coral change to crimson/pink
whirling around and around the many hollows
like a bubble in a faucet
ah wet shower of joy in single sunny moment
and I hold you and hold you
not wanting to be real again.....

LOVE IS OUT TO LUNCH

Love is out to lunch.....
having steak
without me
or maybe
lobster
without me
anyway
love is away on business
in the dissolute stillness
fishing
or dreaming
or thinking of music
without me
without me
without me
leave a message
at the tone.....

***

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

SAYINGS, A ROOM

Room is full
of signs.
Orange seeds that
gape. In a bowl,
reflecting
one mirror, full
of sayings.
Rocks, the stink of beach.
Clothes that hang and
belch. In colors closet full.
Naked women
drawn with a
pencil all over the walls.
Windows so small, they
point to outside and say
"ho."
Bottles of MAGNESIUM and IRON
reminding not to
get depressed.
Keys on the desk wait.
Ready to be jingled, erected
into organic locks. A click
so sensual.
Radiator is a grumpshit. It
cannot clang in
august. Telephone, red
beeps. Rings a deadly
computer, a machine, a
pest.
A small glassful of pennies
giggles with money.

***

NANCY LOCKHART

MIDNIGHT RAID

At the stroke of twelve,
Well - it could have been later,
My bare feet marched to the refrigerator
Which, like a coal miner's hat shattered the dark
With its beacon, as I opened the door
To see what was for sneakin'.
Gelatinous giblets, cucumbers with hair.
God forbid I should eat that eclair.
Rank macaroni, bolony all grey.
Is that custard pie, or liver pate?
Stalagmite hot dogs, black boiled eggs.
A brick once a bagel beside glabrous dregs.
A puddle of pudding, pestilent peas,
Liquified lettuce, petrified cheese.
Toxic turkey, totally taint.
Thought I was hungry,
Now -
I ain't!

**

ASKIA
(Ronald Dale Evans)

DA DIFFERENCE IS?

Dam roach running around...
shit I know some of your people
Water bug, Yea
he's in yo family aint he
Usta see him often over on Munroe street
in fact every time I went in the kitchen at nite
and turned da lights on
YEA!
I done ran into yo type befo motherfucker.
Dis aint da Ghetto on munroe this is fo 240.00
a month chump or can't you tell??

*****

MARY ANN GILMAN

NEVER THE SAME

He works with the tangible,
technical side of life.

I work with the idealistic,
artistic side of life.

Only when our bodies engage
do our minds reverse poles.

Then I feel the vibrations
of his mechanical parts

And he feels the textures
of my sculpture.

At those times we are one,
but we are never the same.

***

JUDY BELFIELD

EQUUS AND I

Equus and I
in the moonlight.
Frosty bodies glowing
in the midnight
as we bathe in lunar shine.
He, the magnificent steed,
coiling mane fluttering
as he gallops through the grass;
I, the silver princess
on his back,
stroking gray, cool/warm flanks,
feeling the wondrous
ripple of motion.
We flash through the darkness
tipped in beams of white
soon to disappear
in an envelope of black.

***

JUDY BELFIELD

A BEARDED CENTAUR

I think now
that the field
is quite a safe and lovely place --
where I might dance
in the small grass
with the tantalizing breezes
of an autumn afternoon.
I think of treeless,
prairie stretches
where a great expanse of green
meets an even bigger expanse of blue
and no sounds are heard
but those created
by the nomad-wind.
I'm lonely . . .
and a bearded centaur's chin
rests on my mind.

****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

SLY ONE

All, so afraid.
Also afraid

Love makes passes
at me. The nerve.

It still plays it's
tired games. The pest.

I watch it grow
on the chests of men.
In the sad eyes of men.
In the blue mouths of men.
on the deep faces of men.
In the hold
in the warm strong arms.
Of men, usually.
It
is a
damnable pest.

It started to fester
when it turned pink.
It began to bleed
when it started with it's
heart and flower song.

And I know
that it makes bastards grow
and I know that
it contributes to
the growth of worms.

Still,
it hangs in the sky
of my sacred air
One bright yellow lantern
revolving, clustered with
bugs of the night. All dead.

I will beat it up.
I will boil it, tear it, knock it on it's face.

It is a stranger laughing at me.
And a friend with a knife at my back.

Oh, I do not trust you, love.
Oh, you are a son of a b. with your stroke of-thighs
and lips like a thunderstorm.

JUDY BELFIELD

I STARE AT YOUR EAR

I stare at your ear
and I think
that I might take my finger
and trace the outside softly --
I might brush it with my palm --
whisper a kiss near the cheek
or breathe a sigh
of warm wind deep into its tunnel.
And while I think those things,
a familiar, hot stab
wakes and aches
in the hideaway,
And I follow the line of your jaw,
caressing the skin
with the back of my hand
until I reach the lips --
and, ooh!
as I linger there,
touching their tepid, supple texture,
I can feel the very nerves beneath.
And the secret place
becomes tinderbox --
fully 'roused,
unable to stop the blaze
that's about to spark wild
and submits
to its fire-tongue.
I begin to writhe,
shifting my position in the strain
to remain
composed --
and it's impossible!

And I think later. . . .
all this
from an ear.

MYRT FINN

I DIDN'T EVEN LEAVE THE GATE

It was a bitter cold, snowy, blowing winter night. A night most common-sense people would stay home, warm and secure away from frigid outdoors. There is one breed of human, however, that has no such sense. This species of man is known as an "Owner": a species that would crawl through manure to get to the race track when his horse is drawn to race. The Finn's are of this species.

"Ginny George", a lovely six year old chestnut mare from the Tar Bar line was in the sixth race at Galleon Park. High in the rump, broad of chest and with noble head, she was a free-strided pacer. So swift and foot-true and with such a heart to run, she could have made Pegasus give up his wings. She was ours!

We arrived at the track about an hour and a half before post time for the sixth race. We went right to the barns to let "Ginny" know we were there. She greeted us with nickers and nuzzles. We helped get the tack on and as Kevin led her out and jumped in the bike for the first warm-up round, Ginny looked back at us and winked. That's a good sign, when your horse winks at you.

Leaving the barn area, we trudged over the frozen dirt road to the stands. Just as we got to the guard gate, Ginny loped by, her hoofs making music on the track. Thrum-pock...thrump-pock... thrump-pock, the sound and rhythm of perfect stride.

"Look proud, Ginny," I called.

Checking on the race times, we found most of them had been going in 2:08, 2:10 and 2:12. These were not bad times, but in considering the class of horse and good track conditions, they weren't too good. Ginny liked cold weather and better yet, she loved to race. Even with the wind in front, we all felt Ginny could take it easy, that is to say, win the race.

Standing inside the clubhouse to escape the cold we waited anxiously for the sixth to come up. Finally came the call and run down; then..."Here they come into the gate...They're off!" Now these few words cause a great chemical and personality change in a horse owner. The pupils of the eye dilate, perspiration appears on the forehead and upper lip, even in below zero temperatures. The hands get cold and clammy and develop a tremor. The respirations become rapid; uneven with a shallow quality. The mouth becomes dry. There is an odd pulsing tightening in the gut. The voice becomes coarse and loud. The most mild-mannered conservative individual becomes a shouting, cussing, critical fool. He will knock people down and walk on kids in that driving urge to get to the fence. It's a wonderful feeling!

Due to the previous heavy snowfall, the trackmen had plowed, swept and piled the snow into a five foot high mound that ran the length of the spectators ramp outside the clubhouse and stand. They had allowed openings only at either end of this pile. This meant that spectators and race fans had to walk the length of this snow pile to get to the fence at trackside.

Ginny was parked in third place; a perfect position to hold till it was time to pull out for the stretch run. As the horses neared the half pole, I left the warmth of the clubhouse to get to the fence and the winner's circle. The rest of my family had run down to the front opening of the snow mound, leaving me trailing in the rear. To save time, I decided to cross over the snow heap. Taking a flying run, I scaled the side with three big steps and with the fourth I reached the top. My left leg sank into the snow to above my knee. Figuring I could place my right foot up there to gain balance and free the left leg, I was mightily surprised when this move was executed and I found both legs trapped in the snow pile. I was embedded in that pile, (excuse the expression) up to my crotch! I couldn't move! My pleas for help could not be heard above the roar of the crowd as the horses pulled past the three-quarters pole. Undaunted in my ridiculous predicament, I cheered and screamed from this position as I saw Ginny begin to move out for the stretch run.

"Go, Ginny!" I yelled, waving both arms in the air. This action threw me off balance and I fell forward. Pushing and struggling, I made it back in a standing position, just in time to see Ginny pass the two horse and start her challenge on number one.

"Fly on my girl! Go! Go!" My enthusiasm overthrew me again and I found myself falling backward. I could not get up. There wasn't anything to hang on to; nothing to grab. The snow just crumbled under my clawing hands. Laying there on my back, I looked up to find a gentleman looking down at me.

"Who won?" I hollered.

"Ah...er...lady, are you all right?" he asked with concern.

con't.

"Just tell me who won," I begged.

"Lady...where's your legs?"

"Never mind!" I snapped. "Will you just push me up so I can see the tote board?"

"Lady...ah...let me get an attendant. You need more help than I can give you." The man seemed frightened. He left quickly.

As I lay there, helpless and suffering under the unspoken accusations in the stares of the passersby, I spied a familiar face.

"Hi...over here," I called waving frantically.

"Who? Me?" He looked around as if to make sure I was talking to him.

"Yes, of course, you. Get me out of here. I'm stuck. I missed the finish. Who won?"

"Ginny got it by a half length," he replied, grinning like a fool. This tall man was my husband.

"Oh, Hell!" I moaned in misery. "I missed it all."

Pushing me up by the shoulders, then grabbing me about the waist he managed to pull me free. Stamping the snow from my boots and pant's legs, it suddenly occurred to me exactly what had happened. Quick tears sprang to my eyes, stinging my cold cheeks as they trickled down. I had missed the race. I had missed getting my picture taken with Ginny in the winner's circle. In fact, I hadn't even left the gate!

****

S. STEINKE

SO SOON

Debilitate this teaser, time, with
Rebellious valor.
Let the leopard learn there's too
much life to live.
Condemn and kill the crook that
counts the finite seconds
So that these golden hours
seem more than just
A trifling of a moment's fun
too shortly lived
too quickly forgotten
too seldom repeated in a
fleeting existence.

Morning - merely night in youth
night the beginning of day
And forever will the youthful smiles
of dimpled innocence
Vanish effortlessly into the
frightful future.
And that first repugnant child of age
found crawling decrepitly across
The unsuspecting ashen cheek
has come, it seems,
so soon.....
so soon.

And wasn't it only a day
or so ago
The one who is about to
go where no one really
Wants to go
was the sweet unblemished babe
Hugging the earth with trusting arms
amazing all
Because he was unaware, so unafraid,
of temperamental fate,
Yes, and it was just today
that for a while
there was no meaning to it all.
You see,
everything has come
and gone
so soon...
so soon.

GAMIL ARIDA

THE PILOT LIGHT

Out of the acorn sprouts the big oak tree.
The thunder is mothered by a drop of rain.
The great pyramid genuflexes with awe
On one stone embedded in its womb.
"Life and death" is a coin we toss up every day.
A whiff of air, slow or fast, will fade away.
Tiny heels sustain giant's might.
All our comfort bounces with the PILOT LIGHT.

***

CAROLE LIKER

BEAUTY AT END

Green leaves are turning red and gold.
Autumn will soon descend.
The chill touches life so gently,
Giving beauty at end.

***

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

MIRROR

You are starting to sag, Mutton-Face.
Those silver highways in your hair
are as painful as
nose-drops.
(But they weave with kind fingers.)
Slow skin falls like an
avalanche each year
in quiet places.
And those creasing rivers run.
So what if they leave tributary children
on your forehead.
You laughed the other day
And the lines stayed for a week.
(Where is that little girl long stemmed
brown legged run breathed tight skinned
soft spider bony you?)
She's in there somewhere, Everest-Head,
giggling at those geographic tits.
Choking on her oatmeal at those
baby-maker scars.
Yes, oh sad rump,
some territory spirit has
waved her wand and
your R.I.P. is showing.

******

JUDY BELFIELD

AN AMBULANCE

An ambulance races
through the streets,
siren screeching,
red light flashing.
In its rear chamber
lies a dead man --
newly dead,
not yet cold.
Attendants,
in their frantic efforts
to delay the certain result,
missed the rattle
and an escaping croak
of wind
that feebly said,
"Damn."

****

PAT MULDER

OLD WILLIE

Old Willie writes in ballad form.
His verses are sublime.
His stress is clear, his meter moves
in crisp three-quarter time.

He has a way with structured verse
that no one will deny.
He shapes his lines to ancient rhymes
that some of us pass by.

What makes Old Willie write this way?
He knows that verse is free.
Perhaps he lived when discipline
was thought to be the key,

or maybe Willie hears a beat
we cannot understand,
a sound that drives him to display
his clever sleight of hand.

****

MARY ANN GILMAN

HE COMES

He comes with the sound of tin
like a knight in armor.
The dragon has been wounded in
the knee and I have hope of salvation.
He calls out and I answer,
wondering where is the fanfare; the
flags and trumpets.
I lay down my long tresses for
his ascent, but, alas, he has seen
a vision in the dragon's blood:
"Beware of the damsel in distress!"
He has not come to rescue me,
but to lick the dragon's wounds.

*****

JUDY BELFIELD

HARRY EXPLORED A TUNNEL

Harry explored a tunnel one afternoon --
checking out the garbage
left by litterbugs
who'd been there before.
Deep inside the crampy, damp, dark tunnel
the heat was stifling
as it pressed against his flanks,
and Harry perspired freely,
wedged in black-walled captivity,
slipping on moss-covered rock --
but he didn't really mind.
A faint light drizzled through the tunnel's mouth
and Harry could hear
the birdies chirping outside
and the wheels of cars
grinding on far-off streets --
and fresh-air breezes
tried to tempt him to emerge.
But Harry wouldn't leave
until he was damned good and ready --
and when he finally was;
when he came out into the sunshine,
he collapsed in a clump of weeds --
and died.

***

LYNN SCHLEGEL

POOR MARIE

Poor Marie
she sits
and sits
and stares.
What does she see
with those grey eyes
that show both joy and grief?
Does she see the past
or the future,
or some combination?
What goes on in her senile mind
lying behind those eyes?
Are its crannies and crevices as wrinkled and spotted
as her face,
or as dusty and lonely as the attic in her
abandoned home?
Do her words,
that are senseless blabber to me,
echo her thoughts,
Or am I the one who speaks in riddles?
Is it regression when she calls, "Mommy,"
or is it a glimpse of the future?
From her loft of age, is it I who ought to be pitied
and not her?

****

GAMIL ARIDA

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Weep not upon my grave
or not on me you'll weep abound
What is in there
is just a mask
a form, a mold I wore around
The real me is floating free
with every butterfly
is shining through
with every ray of sun.
I am the scent in every flower
The hope, the glitter in babies' eyes.
I am the force - I am the power
behind the lightning in the skies.
Don't look for me
'cause I am home
in nature's bosom.

*****

PAT MULDER

R.I.P.
ROVING RANDY ROACH

who was sent to that great soup kitchen
in the sky on June 27, 1979, by foul
means, in the English dept. at JJC-
crushed by his mortal enemy - WOMAN!

God be with you, little friend.
Please forgive us your sad end-
your belly, head, antennae, too,
all crushed into a spot of goo.

Oh, dainty dame with deadly shoe,
what did this fellow do to you?
This bug was bent on learning PROSE,
and now he's flat beneath your toes.

Alas, I fear he'll never know
the thrill we get from reading Poe.
His classes done before they start,
all ended by a cold cold heart.

His books lay dusty by the door,
for little Randy roves no more.
Oh, lady with the God-like toe,
his sin was but a need to know.

Little roach with feet so fast,
immortal bug with whiskered head,
you knew your moment wouldn't last,
Alas, I fear that you are dead.

The lesson's here for all to heed;
the roach, the ant, the centipede:
Beware of woman, newly freed,
unless you truly like to bleed.

***

INCEST

Charlie chopped the tail
off the cat
and now the denuded beast
wonders where it's at.

Perhaps the limboed tail
grew itself a cat
and will return to mate
with it's ego-sycophant.

HALF-LIFE

After fifty-seven years of marriage
he is alone, confused,
wandering the rooms
of a memory,
fingering a fuzzy pink
crocheted tissue holder,
petting a white yarn dog
she made in hobby club
two long years ago.
He looks for the half-person
who seems to be misplaced,
wondering when she will return
and reunite with his half,
merging into meaning.
A basket of assorted yarns
waits by an empty chair
as knitting needles echo
in the elusive distance.
Each day is an eternity
of emptiness,
mercifully forgotten
as a new dawn
sweeps his mind
of what is too painful
to remember.
A new yellow dress
hangs over the bedroom chair,
near a sea-shell straw purse
that hangs, limp,
on a cold doorknob.
He makes up his bed,
each movement magnifying
the other bed, untouched,
grown musty with disuse.
Ghosts of a proud figure
loom large in the closet,
crowded with clothes
and shoes
that wait patiently
for their lost mistress.
The soft call of death
wafts lightly, kindly,
creeping around corners
of hollow-existence.
He rocks slowly,
an empty afghan
clutched to his breast
as he mentally unravels
the yarns of mortality
that tie him to this
empty earth.

***

JUDY BELFIELD

A TRIBUTE TO EL GRECO

Lusty, juscular torsos
rising above the vivid colors
of an inflexible cloth --
Whose limbs ascend
the height of the linen
in sinuous escalation --
Bodies trapped in paint
that, nevertheless,
transcend the pigments
and tower into heaven
with their graceful elongation.

Were you hoping to touch
the perimeter of Paradise
as you climbed the canvas
with those magnificent human forms?

Poetry from the brush,
Symphony from the palette --
Elegance resurrected
with voice
to recite its verse
and arms
to play its vibrant melody
on a wall in some museum.

****

THE BANQUET

Darkness
like black satin,
smooth and slick,
is barely interrupted
by the spastic fingers
of a dancing yellow glow.
Fuzzy shadows twitching
in the flickering, flame-light of candles --
Shadows of peacocks
dressed for a party
where there is no wine
or music.
Time standing still in stupidity
of unnoticed silent miasma --
a lone flamingo
rots in a corner
after pickling its feathers --
once carefully preened,
and exquisite in their finery.
But the chatter continues --
floating on an ebon palette
where the oils run riot
and bleed into one another --
oblivious to the subtle odor
of a dying, one-legged bird.

What happened to the grace
that paled the eagle --
the beauty that hushed the others
in their awe?

Arise, O struggling, fluttering soul
pent up in pink-plumed carcass --
You need not dissolve
into the shadowed wall.

***

JEFF E. DAVIS

IVORY-HAIRED LADY

The sunset in a silent night is there
in the glimmer in this girl's eyes
a light that brightly shines while she is smiling

This ivory-haired lady, lady with the sapphire eyes
makes me wonder
if the smile's a disguise
and if the glimmer and the glow
still burn from a fire of long ago
or for someone she thinks she'll never know
Lovely-eyed lady, I'd really like to know

Ivory-haired lady, lady with the sparkling eyes
is the smile you're wearing only a disguise
for something inside,
something you're waiting for
quite patiently?

Sparkling-eyed lady, in your eyes a love-light glows,
but your feelings never show,
is there some question whose answer is time,
someone you're waiting for
but never can find?

When will the sun rise instead of fall in your eyes?
How long 'til desperation takes its toll on your disguise?
How much longer can you tolerate the emptiness
inside, waiting
always waiting for a moment to arrive?

Oh, my lovely, lonely friend, will your sadness
never end?
What magic is your smile waiting for --
Is there a chance I can open the door
and make you happy?

****

GAMIL ARIDA

AN INVESTMENT

I felt a tap on my back. It was hesitant, nervous...but determined. I was waiting at the bus station going downtown. It was the day before the final exam in my senior year in college. I had studied hard all year long and I had the habit to quit studying on the day before the exam. I reasoned that if I did not know my stuff by then, well, it would be too late to try to absorb any material at the last minute. Besides, I wanted to just rest and relax.

I turned around to see who it was that wanted my attention and for what reason. Here stood a short, elderly woman who was rather shabby. She had a serious and somewhat reproaching look on her round face. She was stretching a hand toward me, muttering in a foreign language. I soon realized that she was asking for a contribution. I knew I had a total sum of $2.25 with every penny being apportioned carefully: 25¢ for the bus ride, $1.00 for the movie, and the rest for popcorn and coke.

It did not take me long to decide against any unwarranted act of charity. I just turned my back on the woman and snuggled up my shoulders in a rejecting manner. She left promptly.

The bus station was on a platform in the middle of the street. The woman had to cross the street back to the sidewalk, walk to the corner, and turn right to a side street. You would think that that was a minor incident which would be quickly forgotten. Not so! I started to get preoccupied, even disturbed by it. My super-ego lashed at me: "How dare you chase an old woman in such a rude

con't.

fashion? Suppose she is hungry and has nobody to take care of her.' Before this sermon went too far, my id retorted: "Come on now! You know you should not encourage begging. Besides you need your money to entertain yourself and relax before the exam. You are not really going to solve her problem by giving her your meager allowance."

The argument went back and forth, getting me more and more confused and upset. I had to settle it quickly by making a decision, no matter how irrational it might be. That I did! I found myself running uncontrollably in the direction previously taken by the woman. On turning the corner of the street, I saw her waddling like a wounded duck one block away. I approached her from behind, tapped her gently on the shoulder, and placed all my money in the palm of her hand, closing her fingers around it. I was too ashamed to look her in the eyes or to observe her reaction. I ran back, turned around the corner, and stopped to rest and quiet down. It took me a few minutes to catch my breath and to start to think clearly.

The more I thought, the more I started to be torn by self-doubt. My id shouted: 'O.K., big heart. You sure have saved a poor soul from starvation. She can't wait to go home and stuff her newly acquired fortune in her mattress. You can go home and cry your heart out for all I know!" I was starting to get mad at myself again. Was my sacrifice really in vain? Did this bugger fool me? The storm was building up inside me. I felt cheated, and by an old shrew, to boot. I needed redress. I needed to let her know my disappointment in her. She might not understand or care. I might not be able to retrieve my money, but I'll get even at least.

I ran back to where I had left her. She was nowhere in sight. 'She must be in one of the stores. She could not have gone far," I thought. I went looking for her from one store to another, getting angrier as I searched. I was almost at the end of the block when I looked in one of the stores and I froze at what I saw. Here she was, chewing with all her might and with both cheeks bulging, on one of the hugest sandwiches I had ever seen. I did not know whether I wanted to laugh or cry. I felt a choking lump in my throat. All my body was shaking in delight. My eyes started to well up and my lips to quiver. So, she WAS hungry! I was deeply moved. I realized that this was the biggest return for an investment of $2.25.

****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

THE MAN FROM THE SEA

I thought I was a mermaid
until I came to your ocean
and saw you commanding the green waves
like Neptune
saw you rising God-like on your chariot
of foam
to come and stand before me
your hand outstretched
beckoning
your cherry mouth framing a smile
that rivaled the pearls of your
spumy depths
and even as I sang my Lorilei songs
and fastened sea/flowers in my hair
flapping my fishy tail on the rocks
you were pulling me under
into the salty/green world of the sea
and I forgot my land/visions
to murmur secrets into the roaring ocean
of your eyes.....

****

PAT MULDER

A HELPING HAND

Motions of mumbling maturity
reach through the agony of adolescence,
projecting the promise - nay - the possibility
of a magnificent maturation.
Ellusive flashes of confidence
dance through air tunnels of despair.
The turbulent oceans of torment
wash over a seashore of stability
that waits for a season of ebb tide
to assert a subtle strength
that has been nurtured
by the steady flow of images
adrift in the anonymity of the ocean.

The man-child reaches out,
begging for some affirmation
of his viability as a member
of the human race.

Will you give him your hand
as tangible evidence
of your faith in his future,
or will you watch him
be swept out to sea
by a tide of callous indifference
as you reinforce your sea walls
of soul-stealing conformity?

****

B. A. HAWKINS

THE WOODS OF LARK

The woods of Lark were dead and dark
   it held a town so strange
The people there were all the same
   incapable of change

Twas strange the day he came to town
   a hushed and silent day
When people sat around and stared
   while people passed their way

His face withheld a mocking smile
   his eyes a secret gleam
As he went through this silent town
   his mind was full of dreams

The people questioned why he came
   for no one really knew
Yet they sat poised in fitful fear
   of what this man could do

This man of dreams came to the town
   to help the people change
But everyone rejected him
   and kept far from his range

Con't.

As day soon turned to darkest night
   they left town one by one
They sought the answer to this man -
   each person packed a gun

While he dozed unknowingly
   the guns so cold and gray
Their triggers went off one by one
   and blew his mind away

And then the people of the town
   picked up the body red
And put this warning in the street
   that change was truly dead

The woods of Lark were dead and dark
   it held a town so strange
The people there were all the same
   incapable of change

*****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

PHILOSOPHERS OF SORTS

Philosophers of sorts say
   love is an emotionan response
to logical alienation
   and I am an electric gypsy
listening to garden music
   my cigarette dies in the doggie dish,
On Sunday morning, my
   teddy bear looks as dead as me
lying on the floor after throwing a
fit, breaking glass with
one fist, being afraid.
   Poets are as illogical as
the moon, and twice as fried
   as the sun.
The best hotel rooms
   are underneath tables
in the dark, linen hanging
over the sides.
I was a child who lay under trees
   and smelled the lilac
that smelled back, and
   I got awfully sucked in
   by all that beauty.
Beauty is not famous anymore,
Windows are merely windows.
Faces have turned to egos,
   flies die in glasses of wine.
When I turn pages,
   they are just word-buds,
but they blossom
   and I don't tell anyone
for fear they'll turn me in.
   When I run away,
      someone always finds me,
and I become a strange friend.

*****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

I'LL BE THINKING OF YOU, MOTHER MARY

gone/white/ the smell of the uniform burning in blue and red
dry blood caked and pulsing in the threads/books eating the
buzz like mosquitoes/like a buzz, amphetamine kill, the ear, the ear
Nifty books, colored Faith and Freedom/ethnic driveling with
green. SEE the Puerto Rican kids do have a chance to make IT IN
america SEE the nigger kids too?/HOW LUCKY WHAT A GREAT COUNTRY
WHAT A GREAT GOD, NO HEAD IN HIS ASS/
God bites down and the head falls off long haired brown headed
freak of a girl/she has legs, she has legs, she has legs like
spiders do/she is a good girl always keeps her
legs crossed
hair clean
bum covered
slap goes the hand of one holy man/faces of the nuns watch them/
watch them they can change the yellow pus rosary beads swim
under their skin like dismembered worms/cut in half/blue
veins are the rugs on their lips/popping with the blood of
christ! christ! holy mothers of god and doo doo/
never a crust of bread the front of a classroom
SQUIRMS in the famine/never a loaf of fuck a jug of wine a
slap in the pants, yearning for milk/no, no, never, never
Learn About The Nuns they are running away from the devil
who looks up their skirts and polishes his moustache
in the mirror of their patent leather feetLOOK
for christ's sake/
when did the little kid die, before or after a kiss was stolen
on the playground when she lifted her skirt to discover her thighs???
Class listens, Jury and Judge
the Military is good it bakes only Japs
the Faith is the Hanging, the Blood
Turning around in Church results in many children
becoming little pillars of salt/ You better be careful
BELIEVE IN LOVE, MARRIAGE you squemish stinkids you farts
that bellowed from your goodmommy bellies/BELIEVE IN GOD
you brats you pagans, you enjoying little souls/
A SOUL IS NOT TO ENJOY only EMPLOY in the service of the ONE TRUE
CHURCH
BITCH
CHURCH
BITCH the JEWS KILLED HIM DO YOU HEAR YOU FIRE AND BRIMSTONE PUNKS
YOU LUNCHBOX BRATS TEETH FULL OF THE SUCK OF RAISINS AND BOLOGNA
DO YOU HEAR HE DIED FOR YOUR SINS YOU BRATS WHO SLOP IN HOLY WATER
THERMOS FULL OF BLOOD AND WINE
DO YOU HEAR YOU
HE IS THE ONE THE ONE THE ONE THE ONE THE ONE HEHEHEHEHEHE
IS THE ONE GOD WITH NO
HEAD UP HIS ASS.
Eat your lunch you gutless wonders, carriers of O-riginal SIN.
You dead children, already dead before you were born/worms of
your mothers apple/betrayers of mankind/little fruits of blessedness
EAT.
Or we will shove it up your throat, down your ass, through your
portholes, the hosts of heaven will RUN RAMPANT IN YOUR GUTS.

*****

PAT MULDER

SUICIDE

There is an ending
implied in each beginning
that may be invoked.

****

ROBERT EDWARD NEWSOME

START OVER MERE ENERGY

Remember me now as a name because as "some" you have always used it meaninglessly. Perhaps I am a witch and you would use my name against me, and I have always thought a stolen robbery of education the term some used that said, without meaning, how many or which the knowledge denied by veiled guarded usage. It is in vain to say what you mean by practice now of knowing me the new some. To sum it up pretentiously my name is me, and it means me, not fuzzy data. Sincerely hope I'm not confusing you by making it harder. You'll find pride now that the word is no substitute for the accurate reference and make it a habit from your genes in colors of true profusion. I despise inaccurate terminology from living embodiment of a pun as a title for my being, and knowing my name you must avoid common phrases with it to be synonomous with my being. Some was a poor substitute of a word, and those quanta of meaning it represents as a symbol have real and honest direct relationships to convey in speech and we'll get them used somehow unless you always want the odious personal reference to my probable frustrating personal existence labeled like it is en masse for a celebrity recycled joke to be known like the in-thing. You could please say what you mean; it will be better.

Sometimes they are to me in respect to those times enumerated, catalogued, defined logically and fluently as genepool references, usefully-tooled references to statistically analyze each randomized choice made and mistakenly annotated as similarities in one bastardized half-sensed or dimly-remembered scrapyard of a word, useless information; so abuse my name if you don't want the knowledge. My body is like yours but wears the label that has driven me to think about it: The same test-tube full of some goo but making a test out of it to rescue some truths thought best forgotten by most all this time. Like, all the some stand in comparison, and I have always found them composed to me so that now I find it comparitively better for the sake of accuracy to bring it up like a proving ground problem nurtured in public status suddenly as an issue. My responsibility is all necessary, I see, so I've made it dramatic enough by being so cleverly humble as to disown it as a name until I sprung it on all of us finally out of desperation, seeing no way to slowly generate a spark of awareness for it in all irony, eternity for infinity. Sadly a poor act at trickling a bomb with a word weakened by my attitude, others must replace it with an era of lethargic mental usage which will collapse on an infamous memory of the antihero who became cosmic. Instead because his name was his own and he hated it:

FOR THE WORD NAME NOT ME SCREAM

****

JUDY BELFIELD

TO GEORGE -- OF THE JUNGLE

I seek the giant
who sleeps in the jungle --
one-eyed, like Cyclops,
and thick through the trunk.
He slumbers in the bush --
crouching,
hiding in the leaves,
resting on a tufted bed of grass,
his eye closed,
head rolled over --
A lady's heart could soften at the sight . . .
so I'm told.

Where are you, gentle Titan?
Are you so complacent
that you think you never have to worry
about the Huntress?
Stand up Goliath --
and fight like a man!

******

PAT MULDER

RADIATION

The whirling devil
inside the box
longs to escape
and mutilate the world.
We seal the edges
with cellophane tape,
deluding ourselves.
There is no way
to contain the beast.
Once spawned,
he will persist.

Then, when we
least expect it,
he will burst
our flimsy containment
and destroy us
with one fateful blast
of his deadly breath.

We have placed
the beast in motion
and set our fate.
Now, we can only wait.

***

POLICY STATEMENT

Conformity sucks.
Masses of Baby Fools
nursing nipples of sameness,
dependent on a source
they accept without thought
in order to fulfill their function
in a Pre-Ordained plan
to maintain the Status-Quo.

***

JUDY BELFIELD

MY FINGERS

My fingers,
fresh-washed,
are vacant.
The royal blue stains
of wingdust
from the sparkling butterfly
came off so easily with water,
and swirled in a small,
but radiant eddy
down the drain.

Poor butterfly
is not free,
but flutters in a cosmic hole
on the edge of space and time
While poor fingers cry
in their scrubbed condition
and yearn for the magic
that seems to have died.

***

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

BRAZEN

brazen.
a woman poet
is speaking to the sun
her head a red cactus
and her eyes two sweet yellow raisins.
she worships the desert around her
a lady's warm bath of brown sand
lite glittered
in circles
of delicate surrender.
around her and around her
to be minute swept away by the
tongue of the winds.
delicious.
see.
on the roof of her (taste) mouth
she can color the words of her sight.

***

NANCY LOCKHART

FORM LETTER IN MIMEO

Dear _____Magazine:

Thank you for your publication. I cannot use your periodical at this time, due to the vast amount of printed matter available at the news stands, bookstores, libraries; not to mention backs of cereal boxes.

Careful consideration has been given to your magazine. I always encourage editors to continue solicitation of the consumer.

Very truly yours,

Reeva Engis Sweete,
free lance writer.

***

PAT MULDER

WHAT IS THIS ELF

What is this elf
flittering around my pencil,
teasing, taunting, winking,
darting out of sight,
only to return
from another direction
to settle on my eraser,
laughing at me, feeling
my stumbling pencil move
across the paper
as I search
for a word -
a word just out of my grasp -
probably as close
as the eraser on my pencil -
Aha! That's it.
I've got you now,
you elusive devil.
You're the word
I've been searching for.
See, you fit the space exactly.
There! Now try to escape
your paper prison, my poem.

****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

THE PRETTIEST GIRL

The prettiest girl in the class
had no brains
she had stored them
in virginal bins,
but the guys stroked their thighs,
and unzipped their flies,
in hopes that she'd open her
sins.
Now the ugliest girl in the class
wasn't dumb
she'd read Lawrence and Kafka and Sartre.
She was crazy, askew,
like a half-eaten stew,
and she lived in the rooms
of her heart.
The blonde, blue-eyed nitty
of Dibble and Ditty,
is creaming her wrinkles today.
Her husband's a pimp,
an executive shrimp,
who screws tacos while crying
"OLE!"
(The ugly girl child's now a woman of tongues
cause she swallowed the moon with her eyes,
and she laughs at the thought
that she never got caught catching life
between moans,
counting sighs...)

******

MYRT FINN

FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING...

Allusion, hyperbole, irony too.
Metaphor, personification, sarcasm...Phew!!

Simile, flashback, idiom for fun?
Petitio principii...now, there's a good one.

Cliche', coherence, connatation all blend,
Into figurative speech. Is there no end?

Adjectives, pronouns, verb and noun.
Predicate, subjunctive...My God! they abound.

I study! I sweat! In anguish I pore
Over books, slides and films to learn ever more.

But I'll keep on trying and I'll win this fool fight.
Cause figuratively speaking...I KNOW I CAN WRITE!

******

JEFF KECK

AN INTERVIEW WITH AN AVERAGE MAN

Recently having been on a bourbon consuming trip which took me to several well-known Joliet night spots, I had the misfortune to run into an old acquaintance who boasted to me about being one of the elite few who had been notified of his candidacy for being one of America's average citizens. After some consideration of this fact I realized that I was on the brink of a tremendous news scoop and arranged this interview the following day.

Interviewer: How were you chosen to be an average American citizen?

John Average: That's easy, by computer, of course. Jimmy Carter wanted to find out more about me, so he asked the big computer in Washington and my Social Security number popped out.

Interviewer: In what ways are you considered average?

John Average: Well, just about everything. I live here in beautiful Will County with my average wife who is an average cook. By the way, this is my wife, Jane, also the mother of my two point five children, which is something that we don't quite understand since she is on the pill, but the Social Security people can't be wrong now, can they? As for the rest I earned eighteen thousand, six hundred fifty eight dollars and sixty-two cents at a local factory last year, my two and one yalf year old car has three good tires, one torn seat, and burns a quart of oil every one thousand miles. I owe forty one thousand, three hundred twenty two dollars on this lovely three bedroom house for which I pay five hundred forty two dollars and eighteen cents a month for taxes, principal, interest and insurance. The house is on a one third acre lot on which we have two trees and -oops we just planted a new one with the money from our income tax refund. I hope that doesn't put us out of the running for the national average this year. We also have a color T.V. in here next to the fireplace and a

Interviewer: Yawn. Excuse me, but this room is a little different. Could you tell us something about it?

John Average: It is really nothing special.

Interviewer: But isn't the wallpaper a little different for a family room?

con't.

John Average: Oh, that! Well, why don't I let Jane tell you about it. She really did a good job with this house and she's good with a budget too.

Jane Average: Well, I got the idea when we had some warranty work done on our new car. All it is is red tape.

Interviewer: I feel very comfortable in it.

Jane Average: Of course being average people we do feel quite at home in it. Will you excuse me, I have to get the kids ready to go to their grandparents so John and I can go to the show and you know how long it can take to get to the East side of Joliet with those bridges. Why, one time I got stuck behind one of those smelly R.T.A. buses, had to wait for two barges on the way over and one barge on the way back.

Interviewer: All right. Good Luck. John, could you tell us what you do in your spare time?

John Average: Well, last weekend was pretty typical. On Saturday we went to the shopping center on Jefferson street and browsed around a little. Jane bought a couple of new dresses at two of the shops and the kids got something at the big department store. I listened to a choral group sing for awhile. Then we went out Jefferson street and stopped to see how the swans were doing and little Johnny almost got bit. So then we watched a couple of airplanes take off and land over at the airport. After that we got on the interstate and went to the other shopping center and looked at a car exhibit, bought everybody some cookies and went shopping at the new store and got some more clothes. Then we headed home down Route 30 and stopped and showed the kids how the shopping centers used to be back in the sixties.

Interviewer: What else do you do?

John Average: After the usual yardwork, cutting grass, pulling a few weeds, clean the pool, etc., I get to watch T.V.

Interviewer: What do you like to watch?

John Average: Annually I Watch two hundred six point eight hours of football, one hundred eighteen hours of baseball, seventy six hours of sports specials, seventy three movies. I always watch Three's Company because I love Suzanne Somers. My favorites though are "Archie Bunker" and "The Honeymooners." Now my wife watches four hundred fifty hours of soap operas, most of the football game, half of the sports specials, and anything at all with Burt Reynolds in it. The kids like "Happy Days," "Bugs Bunny" and little Jane's favorite is the "Brady Bunch." Johnny really likes "The Hulk." Course they watch most of the sports with me too. But we take time out every Sunday to go to church.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you do?

John Average: Yes. I have eighteen credit cards and figuring out those statements every month gets pretty heavy sometimes.

I also have been wondering if that new power plant down at Braidwood will someday wipe us off the earth.

Interviewer: Well, that's about it, thanks, John, and I'm sure I'll run into you later.

*****

JUDY BELFIELD

WORD ASSOCIATION

Gumbo
Jumbo
jet-
set-
ting
gel-
a tin
steel
rob
ert
Morley,
Lesslie
Howard
you
'n me, Babe
in the woods
are lonely, dark
shadows
on the wall-
flower-
power-
shower
stall
wart
wart?
Stalwart -- dummy!
yummy tummy
mummy's crummy tomb
me, Regis --
Read this:
fried
egg-
head
ed to hell
's bells
of St. Mary's
immaculate
r than you think
ing of you-
turn --
Illegal!
alien
beings
being freed-
om ring
around the collar
button-
hole
figs
and nuts.
NUTS!

FOR NANCY - WHO'D UNDERSTAND

If you wash your feet,
do you wash your inches?
Does salt hurt when you pinch it?
Could you die in a living room?
If your glasses are broken
does your drink spill?
If you fired all your employees
would they take it personnel?
would they burn?
When legs get cramps
do you supp-hose
they need Midol?
When Mack was ill-advised,
was his counselor sick?
If you threw a stick a hundred yards
for Rover to retrieve
would the stick be farfetched?
If I stick to this silliness
will I be able to get it off?

****

ROBERT EDWARD NEWSOME

FANTASY CONFESSION

I have found myself become the monster mutation, grown of the self-sown seed of clever notes conceived in blind madness and guided by the unfiltered subconscious-unconscious, providing patched paths futures by selection without judgement on judged to live on them narrowly without merciful guidance by a god shunned and ignored, taken to be all of nature in a foolish trust.

I tampered with my reality, thinking it static and unresponsive to my conscious direction, imposing my will evilly without intent to harm myself or others.

Thinking all of creation complete, I added my nonsense, and later found its reflection my own.

My fellow men, holding mirrors and powering my neural transmitter with circuitory destructive currents, try to change me or stop me, which they have.

The robot has wits! He loves us for it also! Wind him up again now to work for us willingly, with love.

The play-acting show was unreal.

******

LYNN SCHLEGEL

MY EYES BLEED TEARS:

My eyes bleed tears
at the crucifixion
of my facade.
The lashes of his words
cut through my skin
and expose my fears
in reddened welts.
The nails are driven
into my sick soul,
and I am freed
from its grasp.
I am cleansed by my weeping.

*****

PAT MULDER

BEYOND BACH

Despite frantic choreography
my symphony is erratic.
My time is out of step,
marching toward a new sound
that eludes the ears
of the astonished audience
that anticipated an orderly Bach.

The flute spews streams
of gaseous sulphur sentimentality,
circling like a halo
over the harpsichord player,
who plucks and twangs
a discordant elfin trip
of hide and seek with
the pianist, who runs ahead,
pedaling rapidly through fugues
of pompous progression
towards a musical cataclysm.

The violin section waltzes wildly,
scraping a serenade
out of rosin and wood,
scattering scraps of dusty notes,
little sprites of off-key impudence
rejected by flashing fingertips.

The strings of the bass
thump with every beat
of the motley procession,
echoing the scene inside my mind,
or am I outside my concert,
looking into my own personal hell?

The chaos continues...
An out of tune trombone
follows the pixy clarinet
down ancient paths
of uninhibited pagan ecstasy,
celebrating a new season
before it arrives.

con't. above

The French horn draws
haunting reminders of tradition
out of the lungs
of an artist who hears
a call from other worlds,
visited thus far by only me.

Undaunted, the constrained callo
growls out a warning
to rebels who ignore
his steady somber
Bach-beat patterns
of metrical moderation.

Echoes of music gone mad
swing through my mind.
Perhaps if I dim the lights,
the cacophony will cease,
settling into a silver sequence
of sound, giving structure
to my distorted mental melodies.

Alas, the out-of-step symphony
continues, as I, my own prisoner,
follow the mad pipers
through a disordered design,
perhaps to find a new form,
but more likely leading towards
a mental earthquake
that is inconsistent
with the metronome-like
matriculations of Bach's brain.

******

FOR JARRI

We remember
falling leaves
in a sad September
that held no promise
of survival.
Blindly we walked
paths of despair,
searching for the one
who was never there.
Now the seasons merge
and we endure,
until we, too, walk
beyond the source
of our sorrow.

***

PARADOX

I need some solitude
to survive.
I cannot endure the patter
of insanity
that beats my brain.
I need to be alone.
My ears need emptiness
so that my eyes can see
what has become invisible.
There is no space
for my mental survival.
Perhaps only in death
will I achieve the solitude
I seek in life.

*****

PAT MULDER

FUTURE FEAR

Reaching into the velvet depths
of the lifebag,
fingering, mentally weighing
each odd shape,
wearing blind eyes,
hesitant to choose
one
out of many -
I pause.
There is no promise made,
no hope, no joy intended.
The question hovers:
Who filled this Pandora's box?
a friend? a foe?
Perhaps.....I don't know,
yet the choice, once offered,
should be made,
and I am so afraid.

*****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

EVEN AT NIGHT

Even at night she wished there were a midnight sun, especially when she had to go to the pot because she couldn't always reach the light above the sink and anyway it would wake up her mom who would get plenty mad at a little kid who was afraid to piss in the dark.

Her bedroom sounded like cricket symphonies, her favorite was the train whistle, maybe the train that dad was running at the E.J. & E. tonight, and she would whisper Hi, Daddy to the stars or she would think of where the train was going, maybe to California or Florida which were her two favorite places because she'd been to both and she hated winter (and even when she grew up she hated the cold.)

Sometimes she leaned her arms on the windowsill and white moon-light which was a pretty good friend made shadows against her face and she could make shadow animals like monkeys and a mule and a rabbit with one eye and when her hands got tired she could take her blankets and make mountains with her knees and valleys with her stomach.

There were so many things to think about.

She thought of her Guardian Angel and took her hand from beneath the covers and actually felt another warm palm press against hers and she was so loved by so many that it overwhelmed her especially when she thought of the Blessed Mother who loved all children and had such a beautiful face and clasped you to her bosom in such a glory-be-to-God embrace.

And she thought of sitting on Daddy's lap and he said she had a bony butt and he always called her 'Nan' and had a clean face except for his moustache and he had kissed her good-bye on the forehead just that night while blessing her with his two fingers like the Pope.

So she pulled the covers up to her neck and remembered that she'd forgotten to sprinkle holy-water on everyone's beds before they hit the sack! like Daddy always said about going to sleep, only Mommy called it Beddy-Bye but she was too old for that, (even though she secretly sometimes liked it.) So she spit on her fingers and blessed the air and figured God would do the rest.

Then she had a vision and decided yes! and sat up in bed and shivered and decided to die someday and sprinkle holy water on the heads of everyone in the world only she would do it quietly, in a rainstorm or something, that way no one would faint or lose consciousness like so many people did at Fatima when they witnessed that particular Miracle.

She covered her head with the pillow and left her nose out far enough to breathe only it was still cold and so were her feet but she was afraid to leave the bed for another blanket because of the horrible black under the box-springs where the Devil sent his underlings to tempt her with dust-balls and wriggling snakes that enjoyed curling themselves around a little girl's legs and then disappearing at morning-time.

Sometimes it helped to say the Rosary or sing but under the pillows was a hard place to sing especially if you were lying on your stomach and then it was better to pull the covers over your head where nothing could get in except through the tiny air pockets you made at the side of your legs where the blanket didn't quite fit all the way around.

Nevertheless, it was a good wooly house and warm besides and it was best to fall very, very asleep inside of it, especially after she had said her prayers and confessed her sins, and made sure that if she died in her sleep she would go to heaven or at least purgatory even though she hadn't had much time to commit THAT many sins yet..

Yes, a good place to fall very asleep to something else, and she did, and she did even when she grew up and still hated the cold.....

****

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

i am not quite ripe

i
am not
quite
ripe, with
my brain
bubbled in
the
green meat
of
young juice,
skin pale as
brushed paper
the edges
a sun-starved
blue. but,
oh my breasts
flourish, wet
nippled and
thick,
my ovaries
are as
succulent
as sugar figs.
the monthly
dance of the
sweet red wine
flows,
rested from
its vineyard. i
do all the picking, i
choose the
ripest fruit.
a
female moon
marks the
days of the
harvest, a
tender hand nestles
the muscle of
one peach. the
dark seed and i
are one
together, rooted
and
brown delicious
in the backbone
in the
deep swallow mouth
of my
earth, good
soil.

JERICHO

After the seed was
planted and grew
my magnificent boy-child
kicked at my sow-belly
in a rage
to taste the air to
beat new life-jazz
with unopened fists.
So they lay me on a steel bed
wetbacked and soaking
and the neon shuddered gracefully
while men in blue holy robes
copped the first feels of his head.
Thick-headed boy
how you pushed and fought
against those flesh walls
and I swore at Eve
and I swore at the snake
that had done this to me
and I swore at the fumbling
hands that loved me with
their tools and the
silver faucets ran.
Needles flew and St. Stephen's
arrows sank into white
flesh, my body
quit
quietly.
Only a pair of eyes
moved
arms were tied down with
sorcerer's tape and feet
that weren't mine anymore
slept in black elastic.
(Crucified, my child inside.)
Green mask on my mouth
breathing the cool,
cold sight----
the hands and the knives
all that easy silverware
and the sound of the white skin
7 layers slit
each purple muscle
opened giving way to
the Underground Child -
the God-men hovered and
plastic fingers sank into
the foliage where the
harvest was to take place
and they stole my birth
with their Zeus hands
and they pulled the defiant
child, tearing him gently
from his old house
as he screamed into the
unreal day.
My dead arms cried
to have him
my breasts thickened with
milk and blood
but I was only a bug on its
back, pinned to a
white shoebox
listening to the
trumpeters as they
shouted their blind
hurrahs.

JUDY BELFIELD

Only the smile of the Cheshire cat --
the moon --
yellow and bright
in the sky of a silken night,
beaming that toothy grin --
watching,
laughing,
listening with an unseen ear.
When the rain drizzled,
he didn't see --
and now
the sweet smell of saturated foliage
rises through the slick, black arch of heaven --
and he knows what happened
while he slept.

***

WATCHING THE YELLOW FLAPJACK

Watching the yellow flapjack
in the inkwell sky --
you and I,
you and I.
Thoughtwaves weaving
the cloth
of minds entwined
in brilliant fuschia fibers.
I hear an echo
resounding --
words I knew would form
and ask the question
long before it even occurred to you.
Threads of yours,
threads of mine --
the satiny feel of silken sympatico:
I know you so well
as we sit under the summer umbrella of black --
miles apart --
you and I,
you and I.

******

MARIANNE CARTIER-BROWN

HEAT POEM

this heat tempts me, it
fills my lips, tongue with
the warm breaded wet of
red
glazing my sweat pink face
in summer icing.
sides of my brain are dissolving
in sugar
while the deepening summer gut
of a smolderbeast
lust yawns
stroking my brown thighs crazy.

*****

NANCY LOCKHART

SUMMER STROLLS

Evenings spent walking -
Your arm hugging my waist -
Thigh to thigh around familiar blocks -
Stopping to chat with neighbors.
Kissing in corners of shade
Under laden branches -
Slapping mosquitoes -
Laughing as we step over
Sidewalk cracks -
Skipping to the off-key tunes you whistle -
Whispering as dark signs its name
On the sky -
I love you.
Me too.

*****

OH HOW THE BABIES SIZZLE

oh
how the in the
babies sizzle big belly skillets of the
sum women.

*****

GAMIL ARIDA

LIFE AND THE SEA

The waves of Life
Come rushing
Chasing one another.
The highs and lows
The knocks and blows
Can soothe you
or rock you
Can lift you to the skies
or suck you down under.
The hustling
The bustling
The music.
The dancing
and romancing.
The green and blue.
The calm on the surface
The depth of the hollow
The chirpings of the birds
The symphony of colors -
The squawkings
Cacophony of sights.
Love making
Peace breaking
The brawlings and the fights.
The shore can be far
or near
but inevitable.
The waves do die
They filter through sand
Becalmed
Defanged
They become the salt of the earth.

****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

I HIT THE SEA

I Hit the sea
like a child I threw my
protests into its sucking arms
damning and twisting out
the nebula of pain
I crashed into its foamy brow
and sought shelter in its
salty lap
I longed for love
in the interior of its
blessed thighs
O Neptune I cried
a child
a child
I walked dangerously close
with my little pail of nerves
bundled tightly into sorrow
which you mistook for joy
I cried over it
and it reached for me
shocking me into a charade
which for all your supposed indifference
did not fail to become
legend in your mind.....

****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

SUMMER SMILES

The summer whispers in the ears
of little boys and tells them tales
of exotic places and different shores
the summer grins
and rises with concrete sidewalks
for the shins of Indians and Cowboys
voices for tomorrow
begin to play the registers
of maturity
memories of sandlot baseball
and skinny/dip water-holes
begin to bake into the summer
streets
and little feet chase the
tingle of the Good Humor truck
yellow flowers and buzzing bees
mornings of blue and white cloud
the tent/told secrets in summer backyards
the cold crush of strawberry pop
Southern mornings and Midwestern days
chicken perfume on a sunny Sunday
the Summer days stretch and smile
and yesterdays blow away
like the white seeds of a dandelion.....

*****

NANCY LOCKHART

THOUGHTS AT SISTER BAY

How long have you rested
In this forgotten harbor,
Oh tired tugboat trio
Obliged by sodden ropes?
Your decks have no psoriasis,
Only the droppings of thoughtless gulls.
There are no bifocaled portholes here;
No cankered anchors.
Just a bit of rust about your hulls.
Distinguished I think.
Yet, Shelly, Apache, Ranger
You seem in danger of extinction.
Just as that ancient lumber mill
Back o' the dock,
Holding to its torn tin roof.

And I recall my Captain
Christopher...
Grandfather on Mother's side,
Who ran an ocean tug.
Like you, he died
Before his time.

****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Once I dared to venture
beyond the world
to climb close to where the
sun held court for fools and
poets such as me
its heat/dazzle orange puzzle
enticed my curious eyes
drawing me close to its
red tongue
reaching out with the green hands
of life
I fell into the microcosm of renewal
a process of soul-searing ecstasy
a revival of the body
a lightning of the mind
straight light from the opal eye
of the sun formed color-patterns
and sucked up essences of Mayan dances
and Nubian rituals
and when I looked away into the desert
left to me
I beheld new twilights born in
heated reverie and dawns that turned
forever golden.....

****

PAT MULDER

FOR KELLY

Periwinkle-eyes absorb
the wonder of a new world
seen through the innocence
of a child not yet weighted
by the illusions that we carry
to sustain our adult awareness
of a world where flowers
bloom once, then die.

Oh, to be a child again,
watching the leafy branches
flying in the wind,
entertaining the notion
of swing-wings
and the possibility of flight
out beyond the mournful night.

***

PAT MULDER

AUGUST RAIN

The monsoon season conquers all.
We fall into despair.
It seems as if each day of rain
is one less day we care.

So let the mud run through your toes,
and watch the fungus grow.
There's mushrooms growing in your nose -
You're movin' kinda slow!

What mattered when the sun was out,
like love and hate and hope,
is swept aside by constant rain -
I fear we cannot cope!

Alas, this month of mist and rain
and high humidity
has fogged our brains and blurred our eyes,
and ended sanity.

Oh, sunny day with air so brisk and cool -
What joy you bring to one who's been a fool.

*****

ADRIANE SAYLOR

IT WAS AN UNEVENTFUL DAY...

Dusty air in the lungs
a fish in a mudbath ocean
flopping once silver then seen
no more
a thought that hung like a fingernail
of moon in a daydream sky
a sigh that framed your hair
cloudy in the wind
betrayed by your nonchalance
faces and hallways and shadows of smiles
the bones of moments absent of
the blood/excitement of laughter or
aural mingling
yellow
faded
hours
that slip into a torn
purple
evening
shot through with chips of wishing/stars
and a somber Autumn chill of expectancy
Tuesday was uneventful
will you come tomorrow
joy.....

******

ANGIE BURKE

AND THE ANGELS FLEW

"Ethnic traditions may be making a comeback,' thought Concetta, as she carefully read the National Geographic's article about an Italian street festival in Boston. The photo which caught her eye as she had leafed through the magazine was that of two young girls dressed as angels. The girls appeared to be "flying," when in reality they were tied to ropes which were strung from two scaffolds placed across an intersection from each other. It had been almost twenty years since Cetta (only her mother called her by her full name) had witnessed the angels flying or even thought about the 'feast.' She didn't even know that the tradition was still being continued anywhere in the country, but here it was in large, color photos which stirred up many happy memories.

Cetta remembered being very young when her parents took her to the 'feast." It was an annual event at the end of August. She and her cousins would look forward to it all year long. The "feast" would last an entire week, but Cetta's parents would only take her for the week-end festivities.

The 'feast," as her family called it, took place in an old Italian neighborhood where her grandparents lived. The biggest part of the activities took place right at the corner where her grandparents lived. The "feast" was a religious and social festival put on by an Italian society which was named in honor of St. Fortunata, a young woman who was martyred. There was a serious and festive side to the activities.

The serious side consisted of a week-long nightly prayer session where the old Italian ladies would meet, recite the rosary in front of a statue of St. Fortunata and light vigil lights. Cetta could still recall that statue. The young Fortunata laid in a glass coffin with gilded trim. Over the years Cetta had attended a few of these sessions with her grandmother if she had been visiting her "Nana" during the week. It was a little difficult for her to follow along with the prayers since they were all recited in Italian, but she tried none the less. Friday night was the last night for the prayers. On Saturday night a queen was named to reign over the festival, and the raffle winner was announced.

Sunday, however, was the real spectacle. The statue was put on a float, and a procession was held within the neighborhood. A band would play, and while Society members and their families, Cetta's old grandparents included, slowly made their way through the streets, people would hand dollar bills to the young girls on the float. The dollars were pinned to the float and later used to maintain the society.

Cetta recalled how her mother and aunts would dress her and her girl cousins in formals and gloves. All the girls carried fresh flowers which had been donated from neighborhood gardens. It was so exciting. It made her feel so special to be so formally dressed. Every year they marched in the process procession, and if they were really lucky, they would be chosen by the Society to ride the float.

As the procession neared the end of its route, the float would stop at the intersection right under the ropes which would soon hold the angels. The crowd would become devoutly silent. All they could hear at first was the squeak of the ropes on the pulleys. Then, the angels appeared, one on one scaffold and one on the other. They glided slowly toward each other. When they were just about even with each other, they would recite some prayers in Italian, and drop wreaths of flowers on the statue. Then, as the firecrackers popped in the street, and the band played, they "flew" to the opposite scaffold.

Oh, how envious Cetta had been all of those years! She wanted to be one of those angels so badly. It wasn't a matter of learning the Italian; she knew that her "Nana" would have helped her with that, but she was always too plump. The angels had to be extremely light since the ropes were pulled by men on the street level. "Oh, well, my folks probably wouldn't have allowed me to do it anyway,' she thought as she paused from the article.

Even though she never "flew", Cetta had enjoyed the festive aspect of the 'feast." She and her cousins had a week-end of carnival rides, games of chance and eating all of the goodies that came with the celebration. Cetta's favorite were the cannolis, the cone-like dessert shells filled with chocolate or vanilla custard. There were other specialties that could be consumed along the crowded street, like Italian sausage and beef sandwiches, pizza, clams and snacks like lupines and chickpeas.

She could almost taste them now as she finished her reminiscing and her reading of the article. She felt rather sad that her children would never see this celebration. They probably wouldn't even believe her when she told them how the angels 'flew." Yet, they should know about their heritage - maybe it wouldn't be as extensive a search or experience as

con't.

Alex Haley's Roots, but it should be pursued. Cetta pondered: maybe that was why she had insisted that the family continue the observance of St. Joseph's Day. Perhaps, the memory of the 'feast' and what it meant as far as family tradition was what prompted her to join the Italian Catholic Federation Society. She felt that tradition was a bond that kept a family circle together, even if it did sound a bit 'square' in these modern times. She figured if Bobby Vinton, the Polish Prince, could be proud and promote his heritage, so could she.

****

JEFF E. DAVIS

A STONY SONG

All alone flying high can be a good time, when the music's playing
and your body's sailing, and memories are flooding your mind
All alone flying high should be a grand time
But when the music stops, you're the only one singing the song

Only three hundred miles to Memphis
I can hardly believe that it's true
I'm not really sure I can take this
When I get home there'll be nothing to do

I thought I'd get to relocate and start again anew
But they wouldn't let me do it, they wouldn't let me through
God only knows why this all had to happen
God only knows what I'm going to do

All alone driving home can be a sad time
When you've got a regret
And you're trying to forget you've been
stoned busted,
Just trying to forget you've been stoned

Only a few more hours to Indy
The longest miles are next
I can't wait to get back home now
And get myself to bed

All by yourself flying high can be a sad time
When you think too much about what should have been
and where you really are

All alone flying high ought to be a grand time
But when the radio stops-
You're still the only one singing the song.

****

JANICE LeFEVERS

MODERN DAY MARTYR

I wish to inform you
that I will not harm you
just because I think odd thoughts
and am off-center.
It's only that what I see
appears to me to be
crowds of bodies striving
to get to the head of the line,
which in my world
is inconsequential.
You can call me crazy
or out of step with the times
but I would rather
that you gather
images of me
full of serenity.
I hope to convince you
that I won't wince when you
throw me to the lions.

****

DIARY ULTERIOR

NELSON RODRIGUEZ

Malignant Polyglot Competitive Level Virus, stood motionless outside of my entrance hatch and requested it open. Fright, tension, mental stratagy power dysfunction; Sensory neurons reacted red alert. I nervously nudged the amber eye of my belt buckle.

"Sorry, satellite presently vacant." Was the delusive message which left the unwanted heretic still at the entrance hatch. This time the virus demanded entrance.

Telepathically paralized by fright, I frantically inserted myself into emergency Thought Adrenal Boost Communication Suit, which sparkled void light wave message. Thinking out the distress signal, Emergency Glitter message faded into its programed destiny.

I remembered my neighbors, whom had opened their hatch to the Virus. Their eyes now gleam the infectous, technocratic gaze. Goal orientational repprograming trance control, had transformed them into competitive minions; Struggling, human against human power plays.

Spasmodically, a repetitous pounding thrusted against the satellite. I hatched from out of the communication suit, and ran to the central processing unit. I played madless across the peripherals. The red eye on my belt buckle glowed.

"Left signal squadron release." informed the computerized voice. Shiny dash brilliances, at blur velocity, sped out from the left spit hurl expulsion vein. The dwarf,robot, squadron's audible-visual angle 360' scanners projected a view upon squadron reception screen. I controlled the attack pattern. However, there was no enemy ship, still the hammer thrusting continued. The squadron traced the cosmic virus. It hovered about the entrance. The blue metallic menace did not seem to be touching the ship and yet the pounding continued. Psycho-kinetic repercussion shake. Since the virus was located too close to the ship, firing at it would be too risky. The squadron returned unharmed.

Emergency Glitter Teleport companion, began to materialize. Luckily the message reached the rescuer in time. Before I could scan out who or what my rescuer was, the pink eye of my belt buckle began to flash violently.

"Agent-provocatuer intrusion," spoke the emotionless voice. The virus had somehow entered my satellite. Glitter companion had materialized into full view by now. As the Virus approached me, I was overwhelmed by motor neuron paralysis.

The rescuer thought a spherical gravity orbit laser ray shot at the Virus. Before the death shot reached its target, The Virus vanished with an echo. As inertia has it, the spherical laser shot continued to travel. Sparks splashed as the placental life support unit was hit and rendered inoperative. Black wire circuitry frizzle. I, raced to the peripheral controls again. This time the blue eye lightened.

"Right signal repair units alerted.' Informed the ominous voice. Spider-like units, hurled out of the right expulsion vein. The outside of the satellite was the most efficient way to repair any electrical failure. However, as the units landed on the triangular surface of my satellite they began to glow a dull blue, then a dis-colored black, until finally, they dissappeared like a day-dream.

The Virus had strategically made its first attack, After destroying the repair units the virus had transformed itself into some kind of nuclear omeba engulfing the entire satellite. As the virus began to crush my vessel, the evacuation tone sounded. Where or how, was I to leave my celestial home without becoming prey to the Virus?

The message I now transmitted to Glitter Companion, was that of confusion and a plea for help. The rescuer touched my shoulder with his glazy glove. Dissociative process, altered space dimensial time travel sensation. I was moving. I knew I was moving yet I was still; It seemed as if everything else moved. Everything was shattering, repelling from itself. Chroma impact wilderness; Colors shooting passed me, I was traveling; I knew it. Physically, I didn't sense it; Zero-gravity lure. I felt discorporated, yet fully conscious of myself being drawn to the color source.

Partite reversal composure. Hypo-pompic state awareness. I felt as if I was waking from a sleep. Everything unified at once.

We were now inside Rescue Shelter Satellite. This was my first time at the rescue shelter. However, having higher sensory perception, I knew that the glass which divided me from the others was an osculate-detector. I kissed the glass. My kiss print was recorded. When the security scan was complete, the glass began to diminish until finally, evanescence.

Cosmic 202, was teleport companion's name. He seemed so mechanical, so emotionless.

'Salutations, enter." they thought. I stepped down from the teleportation cubicle. Cosmic 202, did not step down, but faded off on his next mission.

con't.

The rotund, voluminous entry chamber, was alien in appearance, yet, its prismed radiance, relaxed me; Serene, calm, alpha omphaloskepsis response. They too were alien in form. They were only one object. However, I knew the oscillating sphere contained more than one mind. They were a bright yellow sphere, so vibrantly powerful and supreme; Rotating mesmericly, so placidly poetic. Our thoughts mingled like smoke.

The Virus, once, was a great alliance of the Solarians. Together, they had planned to teach the under-developed worlds, how to maintain physical existence, without it becoming a priority, without it deferring Spiritual evolution. I became skeptical by the word spiritual. They reminded me of my teleportational experience. I, at the time, was no longer compressed matter. When I teleported, I did not separate space, I assimilated with space. Abruptly, they discontinued their explanation of spiritualism, and warned me of Malignant Polyglot Competitive Level Virus. The Virus became dissatisified as an ally. It cummulated its own ideology and broke away to form its own teachings. Teachings of obedience. The Virus, instead of presenting a better way of life, forced its ways upon the worlds.

This was all the Solarians were willing to tell. Because of the flight I had just encountered, they thought it best to answer my questions when my mind was more stable. I agreed. An orange beam trailed from out of the sphere. I was instructed to follow the beam. I did.

As I followed the beam through a multi-colored, null-dimensional corridor, I began to wonder about this spiritualism the Solarians were so involved in. I thought of it as the opposite of physicalness and still being whole. Shedding all material self. No longer needing tangible comforts, or being discomforted by tangible obstacles. But why weren't the Solarians non-physical? This puzzled me. The Solarians as great as they were, had not become spiritual. And yet, their purpose in the Milky Way was to guide our energy toward that type existence. The Virus, it seemed, was trying to keep the worlds physically-minded, but under its control: And yet, the Virus had no vessel. The Virus seemed more like a projection, more spiritual in nature.

The Virus had been an enemy of the Milky way for a long time. The council had instructed all inhabitants of this galaxy, on the procedures of rescue, in case of emergency, as with me. I never thought I'd be one of the rescued, or victims for that matter. I thought it was just space-media propaganda. Now it was too real.

The orange beam led me to a large, suspended, metal disc. Instinctively, I laid on the disc. The beam had informed me that the disc was a mental soother-meditational machine display.

The disc began to rotate slowly. I was becoming too relaxed to think twice about what was going to happen. The disc, now picked up velocity. I tried to sit up, but I had become magnetized onto the disc. Circular anti-levitational pull; I became nauseaous as it spun faster and faster.

All at once, I felt discordant; I had stilled. Everything around me continued to move. I stopped. I realized I was teleporting again. This time the color which swallowed me was a metallic blue. The color of the Virus.

The queen of a distant galaxy has ordered our scientific predators to herd us (inhabitants of the milky way) like guinea pigs. Her preoccupation with spiritualism is the key to these actions.

The device in which to prevent over-complications in these lynchings is representing themselves as benevolent creatures whom are here in the name of good; Saviours from Malignant Polyglot Competitive Level Virus. The Virus is a projected image, derived by the Solarians.

Beware, the Solarians and the Virus are one. Our mind is what they want. Experimenting with our extracted mind is how they will understand/conquer spiritualism.

Gravity repels them. That is the only weapon we have. They are coming.

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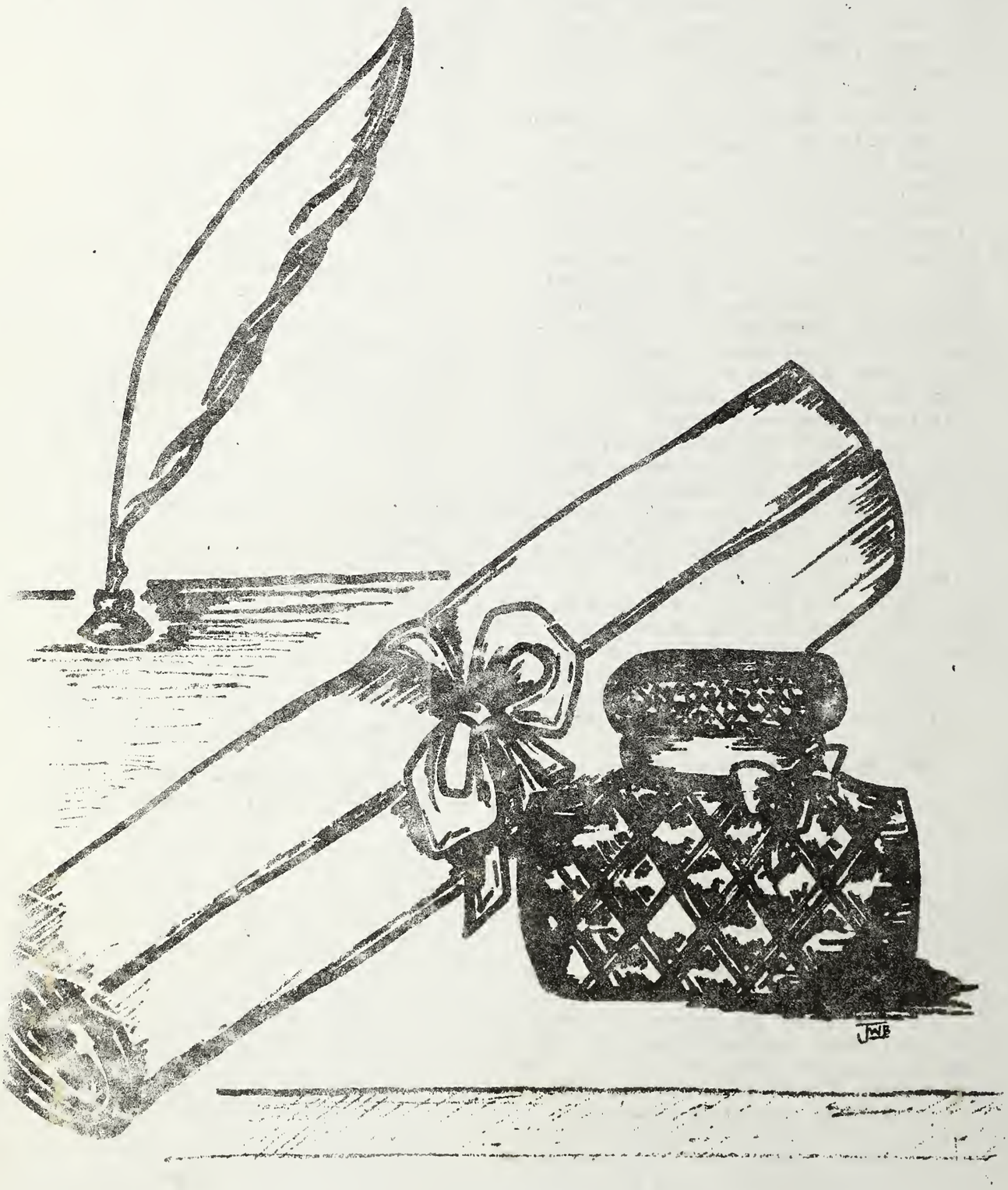
JWB